United Nations S/2016/325

Security Council

Distr.: General
8 April 2016
English
Original: French

Letter dated 6 April 2016 from the Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith a letter dated 1 April 2016 from the High Negotiations Committee regarding the Dayr al-Asafir massacre (see annex).

I should be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) François **Delattre**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 6 April 2016 from the Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

[Original: Arabic]

I transmit herewith preliminary information concerning a horrifying massacre of civilians committed by the forces of the criminal Assad regime on Thursday, 31 March 2016, in the town of Dayr al-Asafir, in the eastern Ghutah. According to preliminary figures, 33 people were killed, most of them women and children. Over 60 injured people remain in field hospitals, many of them in critical condition.

The cessation of hostilities agreement has entered its 35th day. Yet the murderous, criminal regime in Damascus continues to act rashly, systematically killing the population in cold blood, with the support and active participation of mercenaries, including those of the Russian Federation, Iran, Iraq, the terrorist organization Hizbullah and others belonging to the sectarian militia that it has drafted into its insane frenzy of murder and destruction.

In our daily reports to you and to the United Nations, we have endeavoured to monitor the bitter reality of the cessation of hostilities agreement, which entered into force on 27 February 2016. Moreover, the "White Helmets" report shows clearly that the regime and its forces and allies have, from the very first day, continued to violate the agreement, disrespecting both it and its sponsors. They have not even shown any fear that those violations might have consequences.

The regime has targeted opposition groups that have complied with the agreement, which is supposed to protect them from attack. That very protection has thus been undermined, and the Assad regime has been encouraged to escalate its acts of hostility and insubordination, thereby challenging the frail resolve of the international community, and showing even greater contempt and disrespect for the United Nations and, in particular, the sponsors of the agreement.

Today, the regime carried out its most appalling massacre since the agreement entered into force. It launched missiles at a school, a hospital and a civil defence centre in the town of Dayr al-Asafir, in the eastern Ghutah. Warplanes then raided the area, targeting emergency and civil defence staff as they headed to the location of the attack, thereby claiming more victims, increasing the numbers of casualties among civilians and relief workers, and inflicting more extensive damage on public and private buildings.

We have said plenty, and there is much more to say. But the most important point, at this critical juncture, is that the cessation of hostilities agreement is on the verge of collapse. It is nearing its final moments, at which point the situation would explode and enter a new phase that would be difficult to control. Under such circumstances, it would be difficult for the political process to continue. The sponsors' credibility is on the line. They must place genuine pressure on the regime and compel it to end its violations; comply immediately, clearly and unambiguously with the authoritative international resolutions; and enact the political transition process provided in the Geneva communiqué of 2012 and the resolutions of the Security Council, particularly resolution 2254 (2015).

The regime has continued to show contempt for the resolutions of the Security Council and, in particular, for the sponsors of the political process. It is therefore incumbent on the Security Council to impose respect for its resolutions and defend its standing, which has been called into question.

(*Signed*) Riad **Hijab**
General Coordinator, High Negotiations Committee

Enclosure

The Dayr al-Asafir massacre

Warplanes launched dozens of air raids against the homes of civilians and public facilities, such as hospitals and schools, in the town of Dayr al-Asafir, in the eastern Ghutah. The attack killed 33 civilians, most of them women and children, and injured more than 60 others. Among the dead are a member of the Civil Defence and two members of the police force in the eastern Ghutah.

The Syrian Civil Defence centre in Dayr al-Asafir was taken out of service completely and no longer has any machinery, after it was struck by the warplanes. The town's only hospital was also hit.

Following is a preliminary list of victims, because there are still many injured persons in the field hospitals of the eastern Ghutah. A total of 33 deaths have been confirmed.

1. Mahmud Salim (teacher)
2. Abu Sami Bashir Ayash (civilian police)
3. Abu Shadi Mahmud al-Masri (civilian police)
4. Ibrahim Maslani
5. Walid al-Ghurani (civil defence)
6. Muhammad Uthman
7. Muhammad Uthman's wife
8. Umar Muhammad Uthman (child)
9. Ikhlas Muhammad Uthman (child)
10. Amin Muhammad Uthman (child)
11. Umm Umar al-Babidi
12. Yahya Mallak's wife
13. Muhammad Yahya Mallak (child)
14. Umar Riyad Khattab (child)
15. Yusuf Khattab (child)
16. A woman from the Aqqad family
17. Nur al-Din Uthman (child)
18. Muhammad al-Khatib (child)
19. Mu'minah al-Khatib (child)
20. Sulayman al-Ali
21. Muhammad al-Husayn
22. Khulud al-Muhammad (child)
23. Ula Fatiyah
24. Khadijah al-Misri
25. Ai'shah al-Khalid
26. Samir al-Mahmud
27. Abdulrahman al-Khalid (child)
28. Maysun al-Mahmud
29. Unidentified child
30. Unidentified woman
31. Unidentified man
32. Unidentified body
33. Unidentified body

YouTube links

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_IC2piYHMrE

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X0Oo83QJ5ks

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=akN05MgqaKk

https://youtu.be/TuQM0frr5uc

https://youtu.be/p_p6sE5FzeM